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87 WINE SPECTATOR 0200



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SPECIAL ISSUE
Wine Country Travel

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Exploring California

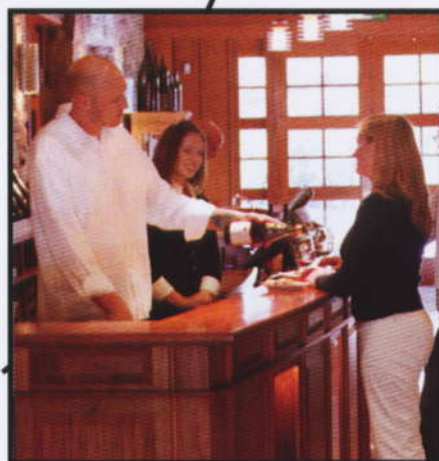
Where to Wine and Dine in Five Vineyard Regions



SONOMA VALLEY



ANDERSON VALLEY



NAPA VALLEY



SIERRA FOOTHILLS



SANTA BARBARA

Austria: Whites Excel in 2006

Great Values From France

JUNE 15, 2006
\$5.95 US





Vieille Ferme Côtes du Ventoux 2006
Juicy, with a range of dark cherry and currant with briar and tar notes on the medium-. Drink now. 120,000 cases made.—J.M.



Bully Monastrell-Merlot Jumilla Enciro 2005 \$10 A round, fleshy texture carries exors of blackberry, kirsch, coffee and sage in this shows a bright, slightly sweet-tart character. through 2009. 2,500 cases imported.—T.M.



Encha y Toro Chardonnay Casablanca Valley Casillero del Diablo Reserve 2007 Hard and open-knit, with modest green apple notes. There's a hint of lime candy on the finish. 240,000 cases made.—J.M.

Wines From Around the World

ARGENTINA

Viña Cobos uNico Marchiori Vineyard Mendoza 2004 \$165 Very well-endowed with dark licorice ganache aromas, followed by a very rich espresso, currant paste, warm fig bread and freshly blackberry. The long finish is dense but very texture. An impressive version of the modern Cabernet and Malbec. Best from 2009 through 2014. 221 cases made.—J.M.

Bodega Catena Zapata Nicolás Catena Mendoza 2004 \$120 Rich and showy, with orange snap, plum sauce, graphite, boysenberry chocolate notes all carried by rich, velvety tannin. Long, fleshy finish is very accessible. Cabernet and Malbec. Drink now through 2011. 990 cases made.—J.M.

Viña Cobos Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza 2005 \$55 A big

through the loamy finish thanks to fine-grained tannins. Drink now through 2011. 145 cases imported.—J.M.

90 Bodegas Caro Mendoza 2005 \$50 Polished and focused, with a core of currant, fig, cedar and coffee notes that stays streamlined through the full-bodied finish. Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec. Drink now through 2012. 3,000 cases imported.—J.M.

90 Bodega Palo Alto Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza 2003 \$38 Still showing well, though maturing, with coffee and cedar hints moving in on the currant paste, shaved vanilla and loam notes. Supple, dark fruit-filled finish. Drink now through 2009. Tasted twice, with consistent notes. 267 cases made.—J.M.

89 Viña Cobos Cabernet Sauvignon Luján de Cuyo Bramare 2005 \$30 Very toasty, with plush mocha and cocoa bean notes leading the way for currant paste, fig and licorice flavors. Long, coffee-tinged finish. Drink now through 2009. 886 cases imported.—J.M.

87 Dominio del Plata Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza BenMarco 2006 \$20 This has good ripeness, with a core of blackberry and currant fruit backed by smoky toast and a lingering hint of tar on the finish. Drink now. 1,000 cases made.—J.M.

87 Familia Rutini Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza Felipe Rutini 2005 \$18 A burly style, with chestnut and beef notes behind dark currant, espresso and tar flavors. Broad, slightly rugged finish. More power than purity. Drink now through 2009. 1,000 cases imported.—J.M.

87 Bodega Tamari Torrontés Mendoza Reserva 2006 \$13 Has nice mouthfeel and texture, with plump grapefruit, persimmon and orange blossom notes backed by a lively finish. Drink now. 10,000 cases imported.—J.M.

85 TriVento Torrontés Mendoza Select 2007 \$11 A light, floral style, with persimmon, orange blossom and clementine notes. Drink now. 15,000 cases made.—J.M.

84 Viña Cobos Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza Cocodrilo 2006 \$18 —J.M.

84 Bodega Norton Torrontés Mendoza 2007 \$10 Spicy, with tangerine and orange peel notes. Medium-weight, this stays clean on the finish. Drink now. 16,000 cases made.—J.M.

84 TriVento Cabernet Sauvignon Mendoza Select 2006 \$11 —J.M.

82 Valentín Bianchi Torrontés San Rafael Elsa 2007 \$9 —J.M.

AUSTRALIA

Red

94 Kaesler Old Bastard Barossa Valley 2005 \$140 Lithe and juicy. A lively mouthful of raspberry, currant, coffee and peppery spice flavors, lingering enticingly on the fine-grained finish. Shows a bit of heat on the finish, but has tremendous depth and persistence. A bit tight now, this can benefit from cellaring. Shiraz. Best from 2010 through 2018. 1,200 cases made.—H.S.

93 Hentley Farm Shiraz Barossa Valley The Beauty 2006 \$50 Rich, ripe and generous, but not heavy, with a blanket of sweet spicy oak and superfine tannins enveloping a pulsing core of blackberry, blueberry and plum fruit. The finish keeps echoing beautifully. Drink now through 2018. 400 cases made.—H.S.

92 Mitchelton Shiraz Central Victoria Print 2003 \$40 Ripe and earthy, this is a bit softer than you might expect from Victoria, but it gets a lift from juicy acidity and persistence to go along with its pure blueberry and currant fruit. It all lingers enticingly. Best from 2010 through 2015. 800 cases made.—H.S.

91 Gaetzer Anaperenna Barossa Valley 2006 \$25 Rich and juicy, with the juicy currant and

and exotic spice of the Shiraz, lending this an upright stance, with lively acidity and firm tannins. Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon. Best from 2009 through 2016. 2,500 cases made.—H.S.

91 Gaetzer Shiraz Barossa Valley Amon-Ra 2006 \$90 Firm in texture and deep and distinctive in flavor, offering coffee-tinged cherry and spice flavors that linger against slightly gritty tannins. Needs time to soften and open, but should get there. Best from 2010 through 2018. 1,600 cases made.—H.S.

91 Petaluma Shiraz Adelaide Hills 2005 \$30 Polished, with a black pepper and coffee tinge to the ripe, dark plum and currant flavors, lingering on the lively, focused finish. Drink now through 2015. 1,500 cases made.—H.S.

91 St. Hallett Shiraz Barossa Old Block 2004 \$70 Reminiscent of a big, old-fashioned California Zinfandel, with dark, ripe fruit flavors and a hint of volatility as the finish keeps ringing. Drink this with a hearty chunk of rare roast. Drink now through 2014. 2,200 cases made.—H.S.

90 Kaesler Stonehorse Barossa Valley 2006 \$23 Smooth and velvety, with dusky tobacco nuances to the ripe blackberry and spice flavors, gliding nicely on a sleek frame. Grenache, Shiraz and Mourvèdre. Drink now through 2016. 10,000 cases made.—H.S.

90 Kaesler The Bogan Barossa Valley 2006 \$58 Firm and chewy, this tough-textured Shiraz has a glowing core of blackberry, cola and spice flavors straining to poke through. Needs time to let it happen. Best from 2011 through 2018. 2,500 cases made.—H.S.

90 Kaesler The Fave Barossa Valley 2006 \$50 Lithe, spicy and distinctive for the earthy undertones woven through the cherry, blackberry and clove flavors that linger on the polished finish. Grenache. Drink now through 2011. 500 cases made.—H.S.

90 Piombo Shiraz McLaren Vale 2005 \$70 Ripe and juicy. A lively mouthful of currant and blueberry fruit shaded with hints of coffee and cocoa as the finish persists. The tannins are crisp. Best from 2010 through 2015. 200 cases made.—H.S.

89 Charles Cimicky Shiraz Barossa Valley The Autograph 2005 \$45 Earthy, gamy notes add interest to the dark cherry and tar flavors. Has excellent persistence and harmony, but this needs to settle down in the cellar. Not for everyone, but those who like the style will warm to it. Best from 2011 through 2017. 4,000 cases made.—H.S.

89 Langmeil Shiraz Barossa Valley Valley Floor 2006 \$25 Firm and chewy, with dense blackberry and spice flavors that persist into a solid and expressive finish. The tannins need time to soften. Best from 2010 through 2016. 4,000 cases made.—H.S.

89 St. Hallett Shiraz Barossa Faith 2006 \$16 See Smart Buys, page 117.

88 Gaetzer Shiraz-Grenache Barossa Valley Wallace 2006 \$25 Crisp and lively, with black olive and blackberry flavors mingling on the lean structure. The flavors persist nicely. Drink now through 2013. 8,000 cases made.—H.S.

86 Langmeil Three Gardens Barossa Valley 2006 \$22 Firm in texture, with chewy tannins around a modest core of green olive-permeated cherry and tar flavors. Not as generous as previous vintages. Shiraz, Grenache and Mourvèdre. Best from 2009 through 2012. 3,000 cases made.—H.S.

85 St. Hallett Shiraz-Grenache Barossa Gamekeeper's Reserve 2006 \$12 A bit firm in texture, this is generous with its ripe cherry and earth flavors, lingering against fine tannins. Best from 2009 through 2013. 60,000 cases made.—H.S.